WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1	1. A computer-implemented method for analyzing user search queries, the		
· 2	method comprising the acts of:		
3	grouping a set of previous queries into a plurality of subsets along a dimension;		
4	for each of the subsets of the previous queries, generating a concept network, each		
5	concept network including a plurality of units and a plurality of relationships defined between		
6	the units, wherein each unit of each concept network has a frequency weight;		
7	selecting one of the units; and		
8	constructing a histogram vector for the selected unit, the histogram vector having		
9	an element corresponding to each of the concept networks, wherein each element of the		
10	histogram vector has a value representative of the frequency weight of the selected unit in the		
11	corresponding one of the concept networks.		
. 1	2. The method of claim 1, wherein the dimension is a time dimension.		
1	3. The method of claim 1, wherein the dimension is defined by reference to		
2	one or more demographic characteristics of users.		
1	4. The method of claim 1, wherein the dimension is a geographic dimension		
1	5. The method of claim 1, wherein the dimension is a vertical dimension		
2	representing a user context of the query.		
1	6. The method of claim 1, further comprising the act of storing the selected		
2	unit in a unit dictionary in association with the histogram vector.		
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1	7. The method of claim 6, further comprising the acts of:		
2	receiving a subsequent query;		
3	parsing the subsequent query into one or more constituent units;		
4	obtaining the histogram vector for at least one of the constituent units from the		
5	unit dictionary; and		
6	responding to the subsequent query based at least in part on the histogram vector		

1	1 8. The method of c	laim 7, wherein the act of responding includes suggesting		
2	a related search based at least in part on the histogram vector.			
1	1 9. The method of c	laim 7, wherein the act of responding includes resolving		
2	an ambiguity of one of the constituent units based at least in part on the histogram vector.			
1	1 10. The method of c	aim 6, further comprising the acts of:		
2	identifying a group of units that have similar histogram vectors; and			
3	storing group membership information for the units of the group in the unit			
4	4 dictionary.			
1	1 11. The method of c	laim 6, further comprising the acts of:		
2	selecting a base unit from the unit dictionary;			
3	identifying a plurality of related units for the base unit in the unit dictionary;			
4	determining a most common histogram vector among the related units; and			
5	5 storing the most commo	storing the most common histogram vector in the unit dictionary as a proxy		
6	histogram vector for the base unit.			
1	1 12. The method of c	aim 11, wherein the related units include extensions of		
2	2 the base unit.			
1	1 13. The method of c	laim 1, wherein each element of the histogram vector has		
2	a binary value indicating a presence or absence of the target unit in the corresponding concept			
3	3 network.			
1	1 14. The method of c	laim 1, further comprising the act of normalizing each of		
2	the histogram vectors.			
1	1 15. A system for pro	cessing queries, the system comprising:		
2	2 a concept network build	a concept network builder module configured to receive a set of previous user		
3	queries and to generate a concept netwo	queries and to generate a concept network therefrom, the concept network including a plurality		
4	of units and a plurality of relationships defined between the units, wherein each unit of the			
5	concept network has a frequency weight; and			

a histogram builder module configured to receive a plurality of concept networks generated by the concept network builder from different sets of previous user queries and further configured to select one of the units and to generate a histogram vector for the selected unit, wherein the histogram vector has an element corresponding to each of the concept networks, wherein each element of the histogram vector has a value representative of the frequency weight of the unit in the corresponding one of the concept networks.

- 16. The system of claim 15, further comprising a unit dictionary configured to store the selected unit in association with the histogram vector generated for the selected unit by the histogram builder module.
- 17. The system of claim 16, further comprising a histogram analysis module configured to obtain units and the histogram vectors for those units from the unit dictionary and to detect a pattern of the histogram vectors.
- 18. The system of claim 17, wherein the histogram analysis module is further configured to select a plurality of units from the unit dictionary, to sort the selected units based on the histogram vectors, and to define a group of units that have similar histogram vectors.
- 19. The system of claim 17, wherein the histogram analysis module is further configured to select a base unit from the unit dictionary, to identify a plurality of related units for the base unit in the unit dictionary, to determine a most common histogram vector among the related units, and to store the most common histogram vector in the unit dictionary as a proxy histogram vector for the base unit.
- 20. The system of claim 16, further comprising a query response module configured to receive a subsequent query including one or more constituent units and to respond to the subsequent query based at least in part on a histogram vector stored in the unit dictionary for at least one of the constituent units.
- 21. A computer program product comprising a computer readable medium encoded with program code, the program code including:
- program code for grouping a set of previous queries into a plurality of subsets along a dimension;

.5	program code for generating a concept network for each of the subsets of the		
6.	previous queries, each concept network including a plurality of units and a plurality of		
. 7	relationships defined between the units, wherein each unit of each concept network has a		
8	frequency weight;		
9	program code for selecting one of the units; and		
10	program code for constructing a histogram vector for the selected unit, the		
11	histogram vector having an element corresponding to each of the concept networks, wherein		
12	each element of the histogram vector has a value representative of the frequency weight of the		
13	selected unit in one of the concept networks.		
1	22. The computer program product of claim 21, wherein the program code		
2	further includes program code for storing the selected unit in a unit dictionary in association wit		
3	the histogram vector.		
1	23. The computer program product of claim 21, wherein the program code		
2	further includes:		
3	program code for receiving a subsequent query;		
4	program code for parsing the subsequent query into one or more constituent units		
5	program code for obtaining the histogram vector for at least one of the constitue		
6	units from the unit dictionary, and		
7	program code for responding to the subsequent query based at least in part on the		
8	histogram vector.		